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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - DPRK-SYRIA NUCLEAR  
CONNECTION AND NATIONALISM IN CHINA

1. LEAD STORIES: All Monday morning papers gave top coverage to the landslide victory of the DPJ candidate over his LDP rival in Sunday's bi-election in Yamaguchi.

2. "Is Bush Administration Going Back to Hard line?" The business-oriented Nikkei editorialized (4/26): "The impact of the Bush administration's astonishing statement on a DPRK-Syria nuclear connection serves as a stark reminder of the fear of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. Additionally, the U.S. administration will be forced to change its soft line toward North Korea, which has been pushed by Assistant Secretary of State Hill.... The timing of the release

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of the information on this nuclear link can be viewed as an expression of discontent on the part of the White House at negotiations with North Korea undertaken by the State Department."

3. "U.S. Silence Remained Too Long" The liberal Mainichi argued (4/26): "Judging from past experiences, it cannot be possible that the U.S. was not aware of an outline of an Israeli attack on a Syrian facility last September.... While Washington may have been concerned about the effects of the Israeli military operation on the six-party talks, it should have made an announcement of the operation in a timely manner. It is terrifying for Japan to think that the Bush administration considered delisting North Korea as a

state sponsor of terrorism while withholding information on a Pyongyang-Damascus connection. A nontransparent deal with North Korea would create problems for the future."

¶4. "Nuclear Proliferation Is Frightening" The liberal Asahi claimed in an editorial (4/26): "A nuclear declaration by North Korea can never be accepted if it fails to address the issue of suspected nuclear cooperation between it and Syria.... At the same time, it must not be forgotten that holding patient negotiations at the six-party talks are the only way to find a solution to the North Korean nuclear problem. The DPRK is obliged to answer questions held by the international community about the alleged nuclear link with Syria, as well as its uranium enrichment. The U.S. should carefully and yet effectively use the issue of delisting North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism as a trump card."

¶5. "Rising Nationalism Is Double-Edged Sword" The liberal Tokyo Shimbun contended (4/28): "A surge in nationalism in China is a double-edged sword, as it could misguide the nation. A boycott of French products prompted by information on the Internet developed into demonstrations.... It was apparent from the start that any boycott of foreign products would undermine the development of China, which is striving to open up its economic system.... The time has already come for China to give up on its hard line fed by nationalism and instead begin genuine dialogue with the Dalai Lama."

SCHIEFFER